

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 and 3-7 are pending herein. The amendment to claim 1 is supported by Figure 1, for example. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Supervisory Examiner Cardarola and Examiner Merkling are thanked for courtesies extended to Applicants' undersigned representative during a telephonic interview on August 7, 2007. The substance of that interview has been incorporated into the following remarks. During the interview, SPE Cardarola and Examiner Merkling confirmed that an RCE would be required to enter the amendment to claim 1.

1. Claims 1 and 4 were rejected under §103(a) over Kato in view of Atsumi and Dillon. To the extent this rejection may be applied against the amended claims, it is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the distance from the outer gas inlet holes to the intermediate gas inlet holes is greater than the distance from the intermediate gas inlet holes to the inner gas inlet holes. In a prior Amendment, claim 1 was amended to recite that the number of inner gas inlet holes is greater than the number of outer gas inlet holes. The claimed relationships between the gas inlet holes of amended claim 1 prevents concentrated blows of the measurement gas from impacting the sensor element, thereby suppressing deterioration in the response performance of the sensor element.

The cited references fail to teach or suggest the combination of features now recited in amended claim 1. More specifically, Kato and Atsumi both disclose gas sensors configured with an equal number of inner and outer gas inlet holes and neither discloses a sensor configuration satisfying all of the claimed relationships between the gas inlet holes. Dillon fails to overcome the deficiencies of Kato and Atsumi. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

2. Claim 3 was rejected under §103(a) over Kato, Atsumi and Dillon further in view of Toguchi; claim 5 was rejected under §103(a) over Kato, Atsumi and Dillon further in view of Watanabe; claim 6 was rejected under §103(a) over Kato, Atsumi and Dillon further in view of Young; and claim 7 was rejected under §103(a) over Kato, Atsumi and Dillon further in view of Nakamura. These rejections are respectfully traversed, because all of these claims ultimately depend from claim 1, and claim 1 is patentable for the reasons explained above.

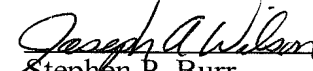
If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees
associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No.
50-1446.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,


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